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**Phnom Penh Regional Platform on Sustainable
Development for Asia and the Pacific**

adopted at the High-level Regional Meeting for the World Summit on Sustainable
Development, Phnom Penh, 27-29 November 2001

1. We, the Ministers and heads of delegations of member States of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, met at Phnom Penh on 28 and 29 November 2001 at the High-level Regional Meeting for the World Summit on Sustainable Development to review the progress in the implementation of Agenda 21 in the region and identify key policy issues, priorities, goals, constraints and actions in preparation for the World Summit on Sustainable Development, to be held at Johannesburg, South Africa, in September 2002.

2. We renew our commitment to the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development and the provisions of Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 adopted by the General Assembly at its nineteenth special session in June 1997 and in this regard, we reiterate our commitments in the Malmö Ministerial Declaration, the Barbados Declaration on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States and the Ministerial Declaration on Environment and Development in Asia and the Pacific, 2000, as they relate to the implementation of the outcome of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development.

3. We affirm the critical role of Asia and the Pacific in promoting global sustainable development. It is the largest and fastest-growing region in the world, with over half of the world's population and the largest population of the world's poor, the world's largest exclusive economic zones and migratory fish stocks and the most diverse ecology.

**I. Regional assessment of the
implementation of Agenda 21**

4. We note that, since the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, held at Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in 1992, the region has made significant gains in many areas of sustainable development, including the provision of the basic physical and social infrastructure for promoting economic activity and alleviating poverty, the development of environmental policies, institutions and legislation and the conservation and management of natural resources and ecosystems, but the region's environment continues to deteriorate and the number of poor people continues to increase, outpacing the best efforts of many countries in the region.



5. We further note that a combination of factors have made it difficult for countries in the region to achieve sustainable development. The widespread poverty prevailing in the region and inadequate financial resources have been among the most serious constraints to effective implementation. The financial crisis in 1997, the isolation and vulnerability of small island developing States that are members of the Pacific Islands Forum and recurrent natural disasters have made the situation even more difficult. Inadequate institutional and technical capacity and unavailability of environmentally sound technologies have also been significant constraints to regional progress towards sustainable development. In addition, the lack of peace, stability and security in some parts of the region seriously impedes the implementation of sustainable development strategies at national and regional levels. We recognize that peace, security and stability are prerequisites for sustainable development in all countries and regions of the world.

II. Key issues and priorities for sustainable development

6. We recognize that the key issues and priorities for sustainable development in the region are multisectoral and cross-cutting, embracing the environmental, economic and social spheres. We further recognize that to address these multifarious issues and priorities will require promoting economic growth and social development, making globalization a positive force for all the world's people, with special emphasis on poverty eradication, environmental protection and management, good governance as described in paragraph 13 of the Millennium Declaration, public participation and human development.

A. Economic and social issues

7. We believe that adequately addressing the following economic and social issues is essential to sustainable development in the region: chronic and persistent poverty, the impact of globalization, sustainable energy development, sustainable agriculture for food security, human settlements development, unsustainable consumption and production patterns, human development and coping with natural disasters.

1. Chronic and persistent poverty

8. We reject poverty as an acceptable human condition. We note that Asia and the Pacific is the largest developing region in the world in terms of land mass and population, but it is the poorest of all regions, with about two thirds of the world's poor, or almost one billion people. The nexus between poverty, environment and development is apparent in the region. We affirm our conviction that poverty reduction and sustainable economic growth are essential elements of sustainable development and that success in this area will require the combined efforts of Governments and civil society and strong and sustained support from the international community.

2. Impact of globalization

9. We recognize that globalization has both positive and negative impacts on the sustainability of development. Globalization has brought about positive changes in increasing the volume of trade, foreign investment and local employment and integrating the economy and the environment by employing market-based instruments. However, economic globalization has also brought negative impacts that are evident in the trade-related loss of natural resources, and abrupt investment shifts that have negative consequences. To make globalization work for sustainable development, we emphasize the urgency of fully integrating developing countries and economies in transition into the world economic and trade system, taking into account national requirements and the need for a level playing field between developed and developing countries, promoting capacity-building and providing technical assistance to developing countries and economies in transition, enhancing the role of information and communications technology as a factor for development, and promoting trade and investment to attain a fair and broad-based distribution of the benefits of globalization. We recognize that the least developed countries are among the most vulnerable to the negative impacts of globalization. We believe that the least developed countries require increased technical assistance and less restrictions for access to their products in the global markets and for progressive integration in global trade.

3. Sustainable energy development

10. We recognize that energy is vital to economic development and that the rapid growth in the demand for energy in the region has given rise to critical issues that include indoor and urban air pollution caused by fossil-fuel burning and urban transport; the availability and accessibility of energy to the poor; the development of cost-effective and socially acceptable sources of renewable energy; and increasing energy efficiency by demand-side management and the prevention of system loss. To achieve sustainable energy development, measures need to be taken to increase the cost-effectiveness and efficiency of energy production and consumption, develop and use affordable clean energy technologies, increase the use of renewable energy, and implement policies to reduce the material and energy intensity of production and consumption.

4. Sustainable agriculture for food security

11. Since agricultural production depends on natural resources such as land, water, and biological resources, agricultural activities affect the environment in both positive and negative ways. For example, some activities, such as overexploitation of land for agriculture, could damage the environment, while agricultural activities done in a sustainable manner could provide various goods and services such as food, wood and environmental services sustainably at a lower cost. In order to lessen the degradation of natural resources and to achieve food security, the pursuit of sustainable agriculture and rural development, while reducing trade distortion, is essential.

5. Human settlements development

12. We also recognize that the provision of livelihood and the basic infrastructure to sustain a good quality of life and maintain a healthy environment are the main challenges in the development and management of human settlements in the region. Underemployment and unemployment in rural areas are resulting in migration to cities, transplanting rural poverty to urban areas and increasing the pressure on already deficient urban infrastructure and services. The megacities are also beset with traffic congestion, problems of solid and hazardous waste management, air and water pollution and associated health hazards, and improper constructions. Measures to manage these issues should be strengthened. Since most urban and rural local

governments in the region have insufficient resources and capacity to address effectively the range and magnitude of the problems facing them and to promote urban and rural linkages, it is urgent to enhance the institutional capacity of local authorities in terms of human, technical and financial resources. Measures to address these issues, including cooperation between local governments for disseminating know-how to overcome these problems, should also be strengthened. In this regard the Kitakyushu Initiative for a Clean Environment should be further promoted. Though on a different scale, the problems associated with urban settlements on small islands are no less acute.

6. Unsustainable consumption and production patterns

13. We believe that changing patterns of consumption beyond the reasonable limits set by nature and production characterized by gross inefficiencies and mismanagement in the use of water, energy and minerals are the most complex tasks in promoting sustainable development. We also believe that it is imperative that the consumption pattern of the world, in particular of developed countries, should be modified in order to attain sustainable development at the global level, including meeting the basic needs of the global population. All countries should promote the transition to less resource-intensive patterns of consumption. The countries in the region should also aim at achieving an energy-efficient and recycling-based society which would be realized by means of a set of appropriate policy measures, including the utilization of science and technology, market mechanisms and promotion of environmentally-friendly business practices.

7. Human development

14. We affirm that good quality human development remains the biggest social challenge for Asia and the Pacific. In most subregions there is rapid population growth and large differences in progress in terms of human development between ethnic groups and genders and between urban and rural areas. In general, women fare worse than men; minority ethnic groups fare worse than majority groups; and rural areas fare worse than urban areas. We therefore call for urgent measures to address illiteracy, malnutrition, poor health, human deprivation, inadequacy of rural infrastructure and facilities to enhance rural

employment opportunities, vulnerability to economic shocks and gender, cultural and social inequalities, especially for the poor, local and traditional people and marginalized groups. Infectious diseases are not only a public health issue that threatens people's lives in developing countries but also creates serious obstacles to the economic and social development of developing countries. Environmental education is particularly important; therefore such programmes in schools and enterprises should be improved. We realize the importance of dialogue as a key to understanding among various political, social, ethnic, religious and racial groups in the region and the world. In this context, we endorse the importance of dialogue among civilizations, as expressed in General Assembly resolution 53/22 of 4 November 1998 on the United Nations Year of Dialogue among Civilizations and its critical role in promoting sustainable development.

8. Coping with natural disasters

15. We recognize that natural disasters, which take heavy tolls in terms of human lives, suffering, displacement of poor communities and economic losses, are major concerns for sustainable development. We call for appropriate measures to ensure that populations suffering the consequences of natural disasters, severe environmental degradation and other relevant humanitarian emergencies are given every assistance and protection so that they can resume normal life as soon as possible. We also call for measures to be part of sustainable development strategies of affected countries in the region, including the establishment of early warning systems, the use of modern technologies, including satellite technology, and the implementation of effective mechanisms for managing disaster situations including establishment of national comprehensive hazard and risk management plans, and mitigating their effects, including, as appropriate, regional cooperation on joint ocean and climate research and observation.

B. Environmental and natural resources issues

16. We further recognize that the regional priorities with regard to the critical environmental and natural resources issues are land and biodiversity, oceans and coastal resources, freshwater resources, energy and

mineral resources, atmosphere and climate change and island vulnerability.

1. Land and biodiversity

17. We note that land degradation, including desertification, being closely related to poverty issues, is a severe constraint and continues to be a major issue in the region, particularly in fragile ecosystems, which include deserts, semi-arid lands, mountains, wetlands, atolls, coral reefs and coastal areas. The rich biodiversity of the region, which claims more than two thirds of the global biological resources, is under serious threat from habitat alteration, the introduction of exotic species, pollution, global warming and other human activities. We stress the need to implement fully the Convention on Biological Diversity, the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, particularly in Africa and the importance of the sustainable management, conservation and use of all types of forests, the recognition of ownership and protection of traditional practices and knowledge, in particular within the plan of action of the United Nations Forum on Forests. International efforts are needed in promoting sustainable management of all types of forests, in particular, mobilization of financial resources, transfer of technology and capacity-building. We reiterate the need to address in a holistic manner the issue and the underlying causes of illegal logging, the illegal trade in timber, non-timber forest products, and genetic resources. We support international and regional cooperation in space technology applications for better management of land use and biodiversity.

2. Oceans and coastal resources

18. We express our concern that the integrity of coasts and oceans is under threat from unsustainable development and overexploitation. The discharge of hazardous and toxic wastes, land-based sources of pollution, the destruction of corals and mangroves, offshore oil drilling and mineral exploration and exploitation, oil spills, marine accidents, excessive coastal tourism and overfishing have been identified as some of the main causes of marine environmental degradation. We call for a renewed commitment to the sustainable development of oceans and coastal resources through effective cooperation among national, subregional, regional and international

institutions responsible for marine and ocean protection and management; the implementation of national, subregional and regional policies for enhancing the sustainable management and use of oceans and their resources; the promotion of total ecosystem marine resources management through capacity-building; the improvement of access to survey and monitoring technologies; and full and integrated implementation of the Convention on the Law of the Sea, the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal and other conventions.

3. Freshwater resources

19. We recognize that the availability of freshwater is an increasingly important issue in the region, particularly in Central Asia and low-lying small island developing States, which has the highest level of water stress. Economic growth, urbanization, industrialization, population growth, overuse and system losses, and the limited availability of freshwater resources in some countries of the region have all contributed to water scarcity in the region. Arsenic contamination in water resources is also a severe problem, causing serious health hazards in some parts of the region. In the light of this, we stress the importance of integrated river and basin management to promote the sustainable use of freshwater resources. We reiterate the need to promote the sustainable use of freshwater by developing strategic approaches and technologies that integrate all aspects of water management to reduce water stress and to maintain, conserve and protect freshwater resources to meet development needs in a sustainable manner.

4. Energy and mineral resources

20. We recognize that energy and mineral resources are crucial to fuel sustainable development. Access to energy resources for the poor segment of our community is therefore instrumental in alleviating their poverty. Special consideration should be taken to ensure sustainable practices in extracting energy and mineral resources and to foster renewable energy development.

5. Atmospheric and climate change

21. We note with concern the deteriorating quality of urban air, transboundary air pollution caused by, among other things, forest fires and acid rain, and the

sandstorm phenomenon, the so-called yellow dust caused by desertification, and the impacts of global warming and climate change on various key socio-economic sectors of the region. Climate change is expected to increase the frequency and intensity of extreme events, such as storms, floods, high temperature, drought and sea-level rise. We therefore remain deeply concerned that all countries, particularly developing countries, including the least developed countries and small island States, face increased risk of negative impacts of climate change. It is important that efforts related to climate change and sustainable energy development should focus on capacity-building, technology transfer and improved access to new technologies, with special emphasis on adaptation strategies. We call for increased international and domestic action in addressing adaptation to climate change, climate variability, sea-level rise and other climatic change impacts, development and promotion of adaptation strategies, mobilization of resources for adaptation and consideration of all the implications of all the adaptation needs, options and requirements. There is a need to assist developing countries, especially least developed countries and small island developing States and economies in transition, in capitalizing on funding opportunities. It is important to improve the accuracy of seasonal forecasting of monsoons and the understanding of the regional water cycle and promote regional cooperation in joint research on climate observation. Another concern is the effective implementation and enforcement of legislative and policy measures to address issues related to atmospheric and climate change.

22. We recognize that the World Summit on Sustainable Development provides an important opportunity for addressing the linkages between climate change and sustainable development and we note the decisions adopted by the seventh session of the Conference of the Parties, constituting the Marrakesh Accords, that pave the way for the timely entry into force of the Kyoto Protocol with the widest possible participation.

6. Island vulnerability

23. We acknowledge that the issue of vulnerability has received growing international recognition as a major disadvantage facing sustainable development, and in particular that of small island developing States. It arises from an interplay of such factors as

remoteness, geographical dispersion, vulnerability to natural disasters, climate change, ecological fragility, exposure to economic shocks, small internal markets and limited endowment of natural resources. We therefore call for urgent measures to address and reduce the vulnerability of islands in order to enhance sustainable development in our region.

C. Cross-cutting issues

24. We stress the need to address urgently the following cross-cutting issues in order to move the region towards sustainability: policy challenges for sustainable development; institutional reform and governance; capacity-building; enabling informed decision-making; technology transfer; promoting participation of and partnership with major groups; and ensuring gender equality and gender justice.

1. Policy challenges for sustainable development

25. We emphasize the need for support for ongoing sustainable development policies and strategies in a number of countries in the region as well as the early implementation in all countries of the region of a sustainable development policy and decision-making frameworks to integrate economic, social and environmental policies into one in order to promote environmentally sound, socially acceptable and economically feasible development. Such a policy should be based on a set of principles of economic sustainability, poverty alleviation and human development, environmental stewardship, including ecosystem-based approaches, respect for effective traditional resources management, and institutional safeguards, with a special focus on poverty reduction. It will also require, as appropriate, an integrated approach encompassing vertical and horizontal coordination, decentralization and appropriate devolution, participatory and collaborative governance, control of corruption, transparency and accountability and investment in education and technologies.

2. Institutional reform and governance

26. We believe that good governance, as described in paragraph 13 of the Millennium Declaration, and institutional reform are among the most important issues in meeting the challenges of sustainable development. At the national level, the institutional framework should ensure the integration of economic

and social development and environmental protection and management to generate the needed financial resources. At the subregional and regional levels, the key issue is to strengthen the mechanisms for the coordination of related activities of key institutions and organizations, stakeholders, private sector, civil society organizations and major groups that are active in the broad field of sustainable development. At the global level the key institutional issue is to strengthen existing global institutional mechanisms that Governments need to coordinate and to support the implementation of regional platforms for the next decade to make them more responsive to the demands of sustainable development in all countries. It is also important to discuss ways of improving the institutional framework for sustainable development, including the future role of the Commission on Sustainable Development, the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and United Nations regional commissions in the further implementation of Agenda 21. In order to create more effectiveness and to strengthen the implementation of multilateral agreements there is also a need to improve interlinkages and enhanced cooperation and synergies among such agreements at all levels. We note the ongoing UNEP process in this regard and expect that its outcome will lead to meeting this objective.

3. Capacity-building

27. We emphasize the importance of capacity-building across all sectors as a cornerstone in the achievement of sustainable development through better education and training and the creation of public awareness concerning sustainable development. Efforts in this area should include building the capacity both at the national and local levels, as well as for the self-empowerment of local communities and the training of more qualified trainers, as well as developing capacity particularly using subregional and regional approaches to understand and articulate the increasing number of national legal and institutional measures and international environmental conventions and agreements and to secure better compliance with and enforcement of these laws and conventions. Capacity-building in the use of modern technologies for environmental monitoring and assessment, including the use of space technologies, information and communication technologies as well as traditional skills and knowledge, should also be promoted.

4. Enabling informed decision-making

28. We acknowledge that sound decision-making and the formulation and effective implementation of development programmes, projects and activities depend on national coordination and the provision of scientific data, information, appropriately packaged experiences and knowledge. We recognize the need for regionally developed scientific infrastructure including, where appropriate and on a voluntary basis, satellite-based monitoring networks and assessment models. We also recognize the need to establish an accurate database and integrated information systems in the countries of the region to promote informed decision-making and to provide the public with access to such information. At the national, subregional and regional levels, the existing mechanisms and infrastructures for data and information flow need to be coordinated and strengthened by promoting the utilization of technologies including earth observation, geographical information systems and global mapping technologies, and cooperation in the transfer of best practices and technologies.

5. Technology transfer

29. We view with serious concern that the commitment to further promote the transfer of environmentally-sound technologies to developing countries on favourable terms as embodied in Agenda 21 has mostly been unfulfilled. We stress the crucial importance of transfer of technology to developing countries in the implementation of Agenda 21. We further stress the urgent need to facilitate the transfer of environmentally sound technologies to developing countries and economies in transition through improved mechanisms including the World Trade Organization (WTO) process, better access to information, and enhanced capacities of recipient countries to utilize such technologies. There is a need to promote the development of local technologies, improvement of capacity for technology assessment, particularly of new and imported technologies, private sector participation in research and development and bigger national allocations for science and technology. The technologies of particular relevance to the region are biotechnology, information and communications technology, environmentally sound technology and renewable energy and desalination technologies, and resource-efficient low-waste and no-waste technologies.

6. Promoting participation of and partnership with major groups

30. We acknowledge the vital role of major groups in sustainable development and call on all Governments in the region to recognize fully their crucial role and promote their active participation in sustainable development. Major groups, including community-based organizations, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), industry, agriculture and business associations need to be encouraged and nurtured, particularly because they have the capability of delivering social services, often in partnership with Governments. One area where these efforts should be focused is the development of effective partnerships with business and industry and the science and technology community in finding solutions to various environmental, social and economic challenges. These groups should be major partners in extending environmental services to the poor to relieve the heavy pressure on local government resources. Special attention should be paid to the mobilization of youth and women as partners in ensuring sustainable economic and social development for them. Governments are also urged to undertake appropriate measures to promote partnership among Governments, business and major groups to support the achievement of sustainable development.

7. Ensuring gender equality and gender justice

31. We emphasize the importance of empowering women in social and economic development by reinforcing their capacity in the domains of education, employment, women's health services, including access to family planning and other basic services. We support the Beijing Platform for Action and chapter 24 of Agenda 21 as blueprints for achieving equality for women.

III. Follow-up actions

A. Goals and targets

32. We agree to contribute towards achieving the agreed international development goals and the targets set by the Millennium Declaration of the United Nations, adopted by the General Assembly in September 2000. We recognize the need for balanced and mutually supportive policies in the economic,

social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development, while recognizing economic growth is important for sustainable development in all countries, especially developing countries and economies in transition.

B. Asian and Pacific initiatives

33. We reiterate our commitment to the full implementation at the national, subregional and regional levels of the Regional Action Programme for Environmentally Sound and Sustainable Development, 2001-2005 and the Kitakyushu Initiative for a Clean Environment, both of which were adopted at the Ministerial Conference on Environment and Development in Asia and the Pacific in September 2000. We look to ways to develop scientific infrastructure within the region to strengthen our ability to achieve the following sustainable development goals.

1. Capacity-building for sustainable development

34. We support the development and early implementation of a regional initiative on capacity-building for sustainable development that will build on existing programmes in the region and be closely linked up with all the other regional initiatives on sustainable development. Its primary goal is to develop the capacity in the region to address effectively the policy challenges and the necessary institutional reform and governance and promote effective partnerships for sustainable development. It may include promoting awareness of sustainable development; strengthening networks of civil society organizations involved in sustainable development; developing capacity, expertise and skills in integrating sustainable development principles into planning, implementation and assessment; building capacity in multilateral environmental agreements and international negotiations; enhancing capability for coping with natural disasters; and improving capacity to cope with the challenges of globalization, including developing skills in trade-environment policy analysis, planning and evaluation. It may also include building capacity for the promotion and use of traditional knowledge and practices, local and modern technologies and advanced sciences to address sustainable development problems. Equally important is the strengthening and capacity-building of subregional organizations working to

promote environmental management and sustainable development.

2. Poverty reduction for sustainable development

35. We support the development and early implementation of a regional initiative on poverty reduction for sustainable development. This initiative may involve the implementation of the regional strategy on poverty reduction, which basically demands sustainable economic growth, inclusive social development, effective policies and institutions and increased investment in both physical and social infrastructure to meet the basic needs of the poor and the promotion of equitable access by all to assets, opportunities and decision-making. We recognize that poverty reduction in the region will require both conceptual and operational shifts and that, to achieve these, information dissemination and advocacy, training programmes and pilot and demonstration projects will have to be implemented.

3. Cleaner production and sustainable energy

36. We support the development and early implementation of a regional initiative on cleaner production and sustainable energy. Building on existing activities in the region and working with relevant institutions and linking with similar activities, the initiative may comprise capacity-building, education and training on clean technologies and renewable energy and energy-efficient technologies; database management and information dissemination and management, including promotion of public awareness; and technology transfer activities and implementation of joint research and demonstration projects, as well as policy studies on technology transfer. The initiative will also address the need for sustainable energy development on the basis of concrete issues identified by the fourth Ministerial Conference and also as suggested by the Bali Declaration on Asia-Pacific Perspectives on Energy and Sustainable Development, 2000.

4. Land management and biodiversity conservation

37. We support the development and early implementation of a regional initiative on land management, including combating desertification and land degradation, rehabilitation of degraded areas and biodiversity conservation. This initiative may include

capacity-building, education and training; database management, information dissemination and exchange, including the promotion of public awareness; and joint researches, surveys and pilot projects. These activities may be implemented in cooperation with the relevant regional, subregional and national centres or institutions dealing with biodiversity and land management or terrestrial ecosystem issues, and by establishing an Asian and Pacific regional network of heritage parks and nature reserves, which may have subregional member networks. In cooperation with existing national, subregional or regional centres, studies may be conducted on issues pertaining to land degradation issues, such as soil erosion, desertification, invasive species and sustainable agriculture.

38. We support the development and early implementation of a regional initiative to promote sustainable forests management in the Asian and Pacific region. The regional initiative may include the following: (a) implementation of a plan of action adopted at the United Nations Forum on Forests; (b) development and implementation of a national forest programme in countries in the region; and (c) promotion of the mobilization of financial resources, technical cooperation and technology transfer of environmentally sound technologies in forestry.

5. Protection and management of and access to freshwater resources

39. We support the development and early implementation of a regional initiative on freshwater resources. This initiative will aim to promote a national focus on fostering the integrated management of water resources and basins; improve and expand the delivery of services, especially to the poor; foster the conservation of water and increase system efficiency; promote regional cooperation and increase the mutually beneficial use of shared water resources within and between countries; and facilitate the exchange of water sector information and experience. We particularly welcome and support the development and early implementation of the Central Asian initiative on freshwater resources in the framework of the subregional Agenda 21.

6. Oceans, coastal and marine resources and sustainable development of small island States

40. We support the development and early implementation of a regional initiative on oceans,

coastal and marine resources, including the sustainable development of small island States. This initiative may cover subregional and intraregional cooperation on conservation and management of marine ecosystems; waste management to prevent and control land- and sea-based pollution; and implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States. To minimize waste and prevent coastal marine pollution, the initiative will also include implementing the Convention to Ban the Importation into Forum Island Countries of Hazardous and Radioactive Wastes and to Control the Transboundary Movement and Management of Hazardous Wastes within the South Pacific Region, adopted at Waigani, Papua New Guinea, in September 1995; raising the awareness and knowledge of the public with regard to problems of solid wastes; and promoting technical, legal and scientific cooperation between and among Pacific countries to protect the marine environment. The initiative may also assist member countries in implementing action plans related to the Convention on the Law of the Sea and support various ongoing subregional initiatives in relevant areas.

41. We call for the early development and implementation of measures to address island vulnerability, including isolation, geographic dispersion, exposure to natural disasters, social and economic shocks and ecological fragility. We further acknowledge that the development of acceptable vulnerability indices may contribute to the prioritization of actions. We also call for further implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, including its review in 2004.

7. Action on atmosphere and climate change

42. We support concrete initiatives focusing on air pollution in Asia and the Pacific. These need to address urban air pollution, transboundary air pollution and sandstorms. We support concrete initiatives to increase international and domestic action to address adaptation to climate change consistent with the provisions of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the Kyoto Protocol and the relevant decisions of the Conference of the Parties to the Framework Convention.

C. Implementation mechanisms

43. We recognize that different levels of economic development in the region will require different approaches and mechanisms for implementing Agenda 21. We believe that if Agenda 21, the Regional Action Programme and the regional initiatives are to be effectively implemented, more vigorous and revitalized implementation mechanisms for consensus-building and partnership, as well as coordination and cooperation, should be in place at the national, subregional, regional and global levels. The overall objective of implementation mechanisms is to make development sustainable by alleviating poverty, enabling markets to work efficiently, strengthening social cohesion and ensuring ecosystem integrity. In alleviating poverty, the region could improve the economic, social and environmental asset base of the poor through affirmative actions. The region could also introduce new production strategies, both industrial and agricultural, and adopt a consumption pattern that could meet the basic needs of all the peoples of the region.

1. National

44. We stress that the key element of the implementation mechanism at the national level is the role of Governments. Countries in the region need to strengthen their economies, reform their public sectors and enhance good governance. They will have to increase significantly emphasis on education and health care systems, allocate additional resources and pay greater attention to meeting basic human needs in such areas as water supply and sanitation, shelter, food and nutrition. The accent should be on decentralization of power and empowering local institutions. The Governments may have to undertake studies to evolve the most efficient system of governance, keeping in view their social, political and cultural circumstances. Governments are encouraged to institutionalize mechanisms for multi-stakeholder participation. Countries in the region are also encouraged to develop and adopt, through participatory processes, indicator systems and targets for monitoring sustainable development.

2. Regional/subregional

45. We recognize the importance of strengthening the role of ESCAP in implementing, coordinating and

monitoring the progress in the implementation of Agenda 21. We propose to hold regional reviews at ESCAP sessions, as necessary. Furthermore, subregional and regional concrete initiatives on sustainable development should continue to be developed in cooperation with donor countries and relevant regional and international organizations. In the implementation of Agenda 21, the Regional Action Programme and the regional initiatives, networks of civil society organizations and major groups should be fully utilized and supported.

3. Global

46. We believe that Agenda 21 cannot be successfully implemented unless the global commitments made at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development are fulfilled and the Rio principle of common but differentiated responsibilities is followed in its letter and spirit. Existing multilateral agreements and related institutions should be better utilized so as to be able to assist countries to meet their obligations under them efficiently. The developed countries should make their best efforts to increase their level of official development assistance (ODA) and take measures to enhance capacity for effective debt management. This should be accompanied by good governance at the international level as well as by open, equitable, transparent and non-discriminatory multilateral systems. In emphasizing the need to eliminate trade barriers that continue to be faced by the developing countries, it is imperative that the WTO commitments to improve market access for products of export interest to developing countries and economies in transition be faithfully implemented. Additional measures will be required, including the future role of the Commission on Sustainable Development, and strengthening and streamlining of the institutional arrangements for the multilateral agreements.

IV. Financing sustainable development

47. We recognize the importance of mobilizing in a coherent manner all available resources, especially domestic, for financing for sustainable development. However, developing countries, economies in transition and small island developing countries will continue to need international financial assistance in order to achieve sustainable development. Better access to export markets, private financial flows, especially

foreign direct investment, can play a substantial role in generating resources for sustainable development in developing countries and economies in transition. We note that the International Conference on Financing for Development, to be held in Mexico in March 2002, will consider, in an integrated manner, all resources of financing for sustainable development. We welcome practical and innovative ways of mobilizing and identifying resources to support developing country efforts to achieve sustainable development. In order to move forward, we therefore urge all the developed countries to strive to reach the accepted United Nations ODA target of 0.7 per cent of their gross national product as soon as possible. In addition, developed countries are called upon to pursue the transfer of environmentally sound technologies and know-how to developing countries on favourable terms in accordance with Agenda 21.

48. We are aware that the Global Environment Facility is a key financial mechanism. We welcome the current performance appraisal of the Facility and support measures to improve operational procedures and project implementation as well as a more strategic approach to the Facility's geographical coverage. In this regard, the Facility should be strengthened within its mandate.

49. We also recall our observation at the Ministerial Conference on Environment and Development in Asia and the Pacific, 2000, that additional resources could also be obtained through increased participation by civil society and the private sector. Civil society is an important partner in improving environmental management and accountability. The business sector is a potent catalyst for development and a critical partner in the pursuit of eco-efficiency. Regional and subregional cooperation could significantly facilitate resource mobilization and the transfer of environmentally sound technologies and know-how. Strengthening regional and subregional cooperation is particularly important for activities that enhance national capacity-building processes.

V. Final statements

50. The Asian and Pacific region calls upon the World Summit on Sustainable Development to accord priority attention at the global level to the issues and the initiatives as mentioned in this platform.

51. We submit this Phnom Penh Regional Platform on Sustainable Development for Asia and the Pacific, together with the Regional Message for the 10-year Review of the Implementation of the Outcome of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development and the Regional Action Programme adopted at the Ministerial Conference on Environment and Development in Asia and the Pacific, 2000, to the World Summit on Sustainable Development and call on the international community for its support and cooperation.

52. We affirm our commitment to full and active participation in the World Summit on Sustainable Development and its preparatory process and call for all countries to participate in the Summit at the highest level.